



Verlorenkloof Mountain Call – Christmas 2018

Dear Verlorenkloof Owners and Friends

I have been pondering over this letter for the last month, as one does, and I noted from past letters that I always start off with notes on the weather and the rainy season to date. This year we are experiencing the hottest and driest December in living memory in this valley but early yesterday morning the temperatures dropped, soft rain started falling and in the late afternoon the hail, wind and rain came in full force – 45 glorious mm!! The above picture was taken late in November and you can see how low the river was – well, now it is coming down brown and gushing and it is a beautiful sight!

Some happenings in 2018:

The R36 access road – a contract for the complete reconstruction of the first 18 km of this road, from the turn off at Bambi, kicked off in August 2017. We are so happy to report now that all is on track for completion late in 2019. The inconvenience of the construction pales in comparison with the dangers of the potholes, so we and the entire community are very happy. We are now hoping for the rebuilding of the final 20 km to Lydenburg and that may very well also happen in the New Year.

National Birding Big Day during the last weekend of November is becoming a prestigious event. This year was no different - attended by a group of enthusiasts ably led by Geoff Lockwood, Jane Smart and Dullstroom friend, Frans Krige, 134 species were recorded during the 24 hour period. To my great delight, our official bird list now stands at 330 species and Verlorenkloof is without a doubt one of the birding hot spots in Mpumalanga, if not in South Africa. This is mainly because of the topography of the land, where many ecozones can be criss-crossed on foot in a short amount of time. My sincere thanks to owners and enthusiasts who work on improving the list every time they bird at Verlorenkloof.



See the January issue of Country Life magazine on Paul Davis, Peter Sullivan and friends' excursion to Verlorenkloof, which was mainly about birding...

There has been a marked increase in the use of guided activities this year and hardly a week passes without a botany, birding or archaeology walk taking place – this pleases us greatly as it is obvious that our owners and their guests are discovering the many layers Verlorenkloof has to offer. Please enquire at reception when you visit and book your excursion, you will not be sorry!



Our product offerings from the farm and our Foodspace kitchen are still in great demand and Foodspace even saw some guests book all their meals for a stay! The Sunday brunches remain a firm favourite and croft food really took off this year. Our yoghurt, milk and Labneh were extended by fresh farm veggies and one of these days we hope that a weekend at Verlorenkloof may just mean that you need to drop some clothes into a suitcase, pack the active gear and remember the kids...



For the past 4 years we had a small private school with a dedicated teacher operating at Verlorenkloof but now the children have grown up and are off to school in Lydenburg and White River respectively and our focus is shifting to the littlies... We launched our ***Hlokomela crèche*** project recently and we look forward to kicking off in the farm house early in the year and then moving into our brand new building during the first part of 2019.

Check out our homepage for more information: <http://www.verlorenkloof.co.za/social.html>



In October we celebrated with Croft 8 owner, Rob Cooper, when his beautiful daughter and our marketing manager, Eloise, tied the knot with local farmer, Andrico Schoeman. The groom was dapper and the bride absolutely radiant and not even the freezing temperatures could put a damper on the warmth of this occasion. As Eloise went on honeymoon, we welcomed Josh Viol, son of a school friend of mine, who came all the way from Hamburg in Germany to spend a three month internship with us. Josh does anything and everything, makes a real contribution in the marketing office and quickly became part of the family. We will miss him a lot when he returns home in January.



Eric and I are well and very happy to share Christmas at Verlorenkloof with all our guests, some special friends from afar and Erica and Werner and their family and friends. Douglas and Jeanne are enjoying a very well deserved family break at the beach and although nothing ever stops on a dairy and holiday farm, most of our staff will enjoy a few days away from work over this period.

We are fully booked and Verlorenkloof is buzzing with activity – our midweek holiday program brings all the kids together and Friday departures are becoming tearful!

You can find our holiday program under the following link:

<http://verlorenkloof.co.za/assets/december-holidays-2018.pdf>

From our home to yours – may you have a blessed Christmas and may 2019 bring lots of new and happy stories. If you are traveling over this period, be safe and make good memories.

From the Verlorenkloof Team and families

SAVE THE DATES:

Botany & Archaeology Weekend: 1 – 4 Feb 2019

Birding Big Day Weekend: 29 Nov – 2 Dec 2019

Contact info@verlorenkloof.co.za for program and more info – book a room of a croft and join in.